

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

070831Z Mar 05

ACTION IIP-00

INFO LOG-00 NP-00 AID-00 AMAD-00 A-00 INL-00 EAP-00
UTED-00 VC-00 H-00 TEDE-00 IO-00 JUSE-00 VCE-00
OIC-00 OIG-00 OMB-00 PA-00 GIWI-00 IRM-00 FMP-00
R-00 PRM-00 DRL-00 NFAT-00 SAS-00 /000W
-----C4B6E9 070848Z /38

FM AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH CITY
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1125
INFO AMEMBASSY HANOI

UNCLAS HO CHI MINH CITY 000227

SIPDIS

Department for Anne Seshadri; IIP/G/EAP for Steve Prieto

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OIIP](#) [KPAO](#) [PHUM](#) [VM](#)

SUBJECT: HCMC EVALUATION OF U.S. CIVIL RIGHTS SPEAKER DR. CAROL SWAIN

A. DATES: February 26-March 4.

B. OBJECTIVE: This speaker program supports the MPP goals of Mutual Understanding, and Democracy and Human Rights. It promotes one of the principal missions of the public diplomacy section--telling America's story to the Vietnamese people. This program also encourages the Vietnamese to reflect on international human rights standards and racial, ethnic and religious issues in Vietnam.

C. ACTIVITIES TO REACH THE OBJECTIVE: PAS programmed Dr. Swain in HCMC and Dalat. In HCMC, Dr. Swain discussed the global legacy of the U.S. civil rights movement with students and faculty at the Open University of HCMC, Vietnam National University School of Social Sciences and Humanities, and with LES at the ConGen. PAS hosted a roundtable discussion with academic contacts to discuss affirmative action in America and Asia, with local print media on hand to cover the event. PAS arranged for an exclusive interview for Dr. Swain with Phu Nu (Women) Magazine (circulation: 100,000). Dr. Swain became the first U.S. speaker ever to travel to the Central Highlands when she addressed students and faculty at Dalat University.

D. EVALUATION/POSSIBLE IMPACT: Outstanding. Dr. Swain's presentations reached out to students and faculty to increase their understanding of the U.S. civil rights movement and its global impact, and contributed to a more open dialogue on human rights and religious freedom--an especially important step in the Central Highlands, where this issue is especially sensitive.

Dr. Swain's discussion of the Immigration Reform Act of 1965 particularly resonated with Vietnamese audiences. Had it not been for this landmark legislation, post-1975 Vietnamese immigration to the U.S. would never have been possible.

Dr. Swain's message is that the civil rights movement did not just free black Americans, but freed white Americans as well, thereby empowering the U.S. to advocate for human rights throughout the world. Discussion of human rights and religion is taboo in public fora in Vietnam. Though not directly addressing the human rights situation in Vietnam, participants at every workshop asked Dr. Swain what they personally could do to promote global freedom and human rights. She advised them to start by examining the human rights records in their own community and in Vietnam.

Dr. Swain is the first U.S. speaker we have programmed in the Central Highlands, a region of Vietnam with a high percentage of ethnic minorities and a focus of USG concern over human rights and religious freedom. Discussing these sensitive topics in the bilateral relationship at a university in the Central Highlands is a significant step forward in post's dialogue with host country contacts. Since Dr. Swain was specifically addressing racial issues in the U.S., dialogue took place in a non-confrontational way that will not jeopardize future programming.

We were very impressed with Dr. Swain and her professionalism and we would be pleased to welcome her back to Vietnam for a future visit.

E. QUALITY OF U.S. SUPPORT AND IIP OFFICES INVOLVED: Outstanding. Post appreciates IIP's assistance for its cooperation in bringing Dr. Swain to Vietnam. Post would like to thank Helen Sebro for her invaluable assistance.

WINNICK

NNNN